

POPEY

. Banished,

With an Account of their Base Cheats, especially, making the Word of GOD of no Effect. And that their Worship, although contrary to the Holy Scripture, they call best.

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Rob. Midgley.

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Hope Williams



(3)

A TRUE Character of Popery.

We do not find that God ever owned above two Religions in the World; the one of Ceremonies, the other without. The first dictated to *Moses* by God himself; which tho it consisted of several peculiar Rites, Oblations and Ceremonies, yet was their institution grounded upon Reason, being either Remembrances of their Deliverances, or Types and Significations of the great Sacrifice which was to come, insomuch that God did not require of the Jews to have any other Gods but him, but for a particular Reason.

The second Religion was that which the coequal Son of God first taught in *Judea*, and commanded his Disciples to spread over the World. A Religion plain and Simple, and, as I may say, without Welt or Guard, but so full of Truth and Sincerity, so full of virtuous precepts, all tending to make Men happy both in this and the other Life, that it may truly be said to have descended from Heaven, and to have been the untainted Doctrine of a most perfect Deity. Now as no Government can subsist without Religion; we thought ourselves the most happy people in the World, when once reform'd, not only to the Protestant Religion, which is that which comes nearest to the Rules of Sacred Institution, but to the most refined Exercise of the protestant Religion, now practis'd in the World; Wherein there is neither Defect of Devotion nor redundance of Superstition, a Decency with Gravity, a Decorum avoiding the Moroseness of a Clownish Behaviour to the Sovereign of Heaven. No Superstitions assuming to its self a Sanctity above others, but a piety and charity grounded upon, and warranted by Scripture, without which all Religion is but a seeming, and no true Religion.

For this Reason it was, that the Author of this ensuing paper, a person, of no less piety and Learning than Sharpness of Wit and Soundness of Judgment, wrote with such an Abhorrence as he does of the popish Religion, if it may deservedly be call'd a Religion, as the Gentleman well observes; and that he

laboured to set it forth in its proper Colours, as if he had intended it as his last Legacy to this Nation, to shew how ruinous it would be to us, should we be again compell'd to embrace it ; and with the Dog be constrained to return to our former Vomit : And as it were Prophecically to let us understand what a Deliverance G O D has been pleased to bestow upon us, in so lately freeing the Kingdom from that Inundation of *Antichristian Pomp and Vanity, and Cheats of Romish Superstition*, which was about to have overwhelmed it. 'Tis true, the Touches are bold ; but it is a Description to the Life : And bold Strokes in Painting are many times more grateful to the Eye and Master-like, than the smooth Touches of an effeminate Pencil. For which Reason it was thought expedient to abstract these few Pages from the rest of the Treatise, and to hang them up in the Face of the Nation, as the most lively Picture of the Senility, Vanity and Treachery, of the Romish Profession. The Words themselves are these. In short, says he, there is nothing comes nearer in Government to the Divine Perfection, than where the Monarch, as with us, enjoys a Capacity of doing all the Good imaginable to Mankind, under disabilities to all that is evil.

And as we are thus happy in the Constitution of our State, so are we yet more blessed in that of our Church, being free from that Romish Yoke, which so great a part of Christendom do yet draw and labour under. That Popery is such a thing as cannot, but for want of a Word to express it, be called a Religion : Nor is it to be mentioned with that Civility which is otherwise decent to be used, in speaking of the Differences of Humane Opinion about Divine Matters. Were it either open Judaism, or plain Turkey, or honest Paganism, there is yet a certain *Bona Fides* in the extravagant Belief, and Sincerity of an erroneous Profession may render it more pardonable. But this is a Compound of all the Three, an extract of whatsoever is most Ridiculous and Impious in them, incorporated with more peculiar Absurdities of its own, in which those were deficient, and all this deliberately contrived, knowingly carried on by the bold Imposture of Paganism, the Nation, Christianity. The Will power of this high Religion did never make an insolent Attempt upon the

the Credulity of Mankind seems to me (though not ignorant otherwise of Times, Degrees and Methods of its Progress) principally to have consisted in their owning the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and the Rule of Faith and Manners, but in prohibiting of the same their common Use, or the Reading of them in publick Churches, but in a *Latin* Translation to the Vulgar; There being no better or more rational way to frustrate the very Design of the great Institutor of Christianity, who first planted it by the extraordinary Gift of Tongues, than to forbid the use even of the ordinary Languages. For having thus a Book, which is universally avowed to be of Divine Authority, but Sequestring it only into such Hands as were entrusted in the Cheat, they had the Opportunity to Vitiate, Suppress or Interpret to their own profit these Records by which the poor People hold their Salvation. And this necessary Point being once gained, there was thence forward nothing so monstruous to Reason, so abhorring from Morality, or so contrary to Scripture which they might not in prudence adventure on. The Idolatry (for alas it is neither better nor worse) of Adoring and Praying to Saines and Angels, of Worshipping Pictures, Images and Relicks, incredible Miracles and palpable Fables to promot that Veneration. The whole Liturgy and Worship of the Blessed Virgin. The saying of *Pater Noster's* and *Credos*, to the honour of Saines, and of *Ave Mary's* too, not to her honour, but of others. The publick Service, which they can spare to God among so many Competitors, in an unknown Tongue and intangled with such Vilemores, Consecrations, Exorcisms, Whisperings, Sprinklings, Confines and Phantastical Rites, Gesticulations, and Removals, so unbecoming a Christian Office, that it represents rather the Drunks and Cut-throats of Inglat and Conjurors than useful of the Cup to the Laity. The action of the Priests Intended to make any of their Servants to be a Bishop, or a Clergyman, Marriage, Interdicting of Meats, and other such like Practices which them practised. Religion, Religion, Religion, Religion, Religion.

above all their other Devices, that Transubstantial *Salacism*; whereby they glorified Body, which at the same time they allow to be in Heaven, is Sold again, and Crucified daily upon all the Altars of their Communion. For GOD indeed may now and then do a Miracle, but a Romish Priest can, it seems works in one Moment a Thousand Impossibilities. Thus by a new and Antiscriptural Belief, compiled of Terrors to the Phantie, Contradictions to Sense, and Impositions on the understanding, their Laity have turned Tenants for their Souls, and in Consequence Tributary for their Estates to a more than Omnipotent Priesthood.

I must indeed do them that Right to avow, that out of equitable Consideration, and Recompence of so faithful a Slavery, they have discharged the People from all other Services and Dependance, Infranchised them from all Duty to God or Man; In so much that their severest and more learned Divines, their Governors of Conscience, have so well instructed them in all the Arts of Circumventing their Neighbour, and of Colluding with Heaven; that were the Scholars as apt as their Teachers, there would have been long since an end of all either true Piety or common Honesty; and nothing left among them but authorized Hypocrisie, Licensomess and Knavery; had not the natural worth of the better sort, and the good Simplicity of the Meaner, In great measure preserved them. For nothing indeed, but an extraordinary Temper and Ingenuity of Spirit, and that too assisted by a Diviner Influence, could possibly restrain those within any the Terms or Laws of Humanity, who at the same time own the Doctrine of their *Casuits*, or the Authority of the Pope, as it is by him claimed and exercised. He by his Indulgences delivers Souls out of the palms of the other World: So that who would refuse to be vicious here, upon so good Security. He by his Dispensation annuls Contracts betwixt Man and Man, dissolves Oaths between Princes, or betwixt them and their People, and gives Allowance in Cases which God and Nature prohibits. He, as Clerk of the Spiritual Marker, hath set a Rate upon all Crimes: The more flagitious they are and abominable, the better Commodities, and Men pay only an higher price as for greater Rarities. So that it seems as if the Commands of God had been invented merely to erect an Office for the Pope; the worse Christians Men are, the better Customers: And this *Rome* does by the same policy People its Church, as the Pagan *Kome* did the City, by opening a Sanctuary to all Malefactors. And why not, if his power be indeed of such Virtue and Extent, as is by him challenged? That he is the Ruler over Angels, Purgatory, and Hell. That his Tribunal and Gods are all one. That all that God, he can do, *Clavis non iurare*, and what he does is as GOD, and not as Man. That he is the Universal Head of the Church, the sole Interpreter of Scripture, and Judge of Controversie. That he is above General Councils. That his power is Absolute, and his Decrees infallible. That he can change the very Nature of things, making what is Just, to be Unjust, and what is Vice to be Virtue. That all Laws are in the Cabinet of his Breast. That he can Dispense with the New Testament to the great Injury of the Devils. That he is still Monarch of the World, and that he can Dispose of Kingdoms and Empires as he pleases; which things being granted, that *Solus Optimus Maximus & Supremum Numen in Terris*, or that of *Dominus Deus noster Papa*, was no such extraordinary stroke of Courtship, as we reckoned; But it was rather a great flattery in him thus treated so mighty a Prince under the simple Title

Title of Vice Deess. The Exercise of his Dominion is in all points suitable to this his presence. He antiquates the Precepts of Christ, as things only of good Advice, not commanded: But makes it a mortal sin, even to doubt of any part of his own Religion, and Demands, under pain of Damnation, the Subjection of all Christians to his Papal Authority: The denying of two things so Reasonable as blind Obedience to his power, and an Implicit Faith to his Doctrine, being the most unpardonable Crime under his dispensation. He has indeed of late been somewhat more retentive than formerly, as to his Faculty of disposing of Kingdoms, the thing not having succeeded well with him in some Instances; But he lays the same claim still, continues the same inclination, and though Velvet-Headed hath the more Itch to the pushing: And however in order to any occasion, he keeps himself in breath always by cursing one Prince or other upon every Munday, Thurday: Nor is there any, whether Prince or Nation, that Dissents from his Usurpations, but are marked out under the notion of Hereticks to Ruine and Destruction, whensoever he shall give the Signal. That Word of Heresie misapplyed, hath served him for so many Ages to justifie all the Executions, Assassinations, Wars, Massacres and Devastations, whereby his Faith hath been propogated; of which our Times also have not wanted Examples, and more is to be expected for the future. For by how much any thing is more false and unreasonable, it requires more cruelty to establish it: And to introduce that which is absurd, there must be somewhat done that is barbarous. But nothing of any Sect in Religion can be more recommended by all these Qualities than the Papacy. The Pagans are excusable by their natural Darknes, without Revelation. The Jews are tolerable, who see not beyond the Old Testament. Mahomet was so honest as to owne what he would be at, that he himself was the greatest Prophet, and that his was a Religion of the Sword. So that these were all, as I may say, of another Allegiance, and if Enemies, yet no Traytors: But the Pope avowing Christianity by profession, doth in Doctrine and practice renounce it; And presuming to be the only Catholick, persecute those to the Death, who dare worship the Author of their Religion, instead of his pretended Vicegerent.

And yet there is nothing more evident, notwithstanding his most notorious Forgeries, and Falsification of all Writers, than that the Pope was for several Hundred Years an honest Bishop, as other Men are, and never so much as dreamed upon the seven Hills, of that Universal power, which he is now come to, Nay, was the first that opposed any such pretension. But some of them, at last, growing wiser, by loifting a counterfeit Donation of Constantine, and wresting another Donation from our Saviour, advanced themselves,

Divided in a weak, ignorant and turbulent Age, in the French Court, and with such
difficulties they are now master of it. *To the Return of such base Vices*, *malice*, *jealousy*, *envy*, *greediness*,
Never was a Bishopric and a Vicar of scripture so improved by good Management. — By
exercising in the Quality of *CHRIST* / *God*, the publick Function, without let or hindrance from
the Pope, like the Mayor of the palace, their letches Matter sides, and driveth out the
vermin, set to a new Line of papal Succession. — But who can, *unconsciously*, be ignorant
what wretched Doings, what Bribery, what Ambition there are, from amongst Cardinals,
without an Head, upon every Vacancy, till among the Crew of bandying Cardinals, the
Holy Ghost hath declared for a Pope of the *French* or *Spanish* Faction. — It is a succession like
that of the *Egyptian* *God* (the living Idol of that Country) who dying of being made away by the
Priests, there was a solemn and general Mourning, for want of a Deity, until another God
came who had found out another Beast with the very same marks with former, whom they
themselves adored, and with great Jubilee, brought forth to the people to Worship. — Nor
was that Election a greater Reproach to Humanæ Religion than this is also to Christianity.
Surely it is the greatest Miracle of the Romish Church, that it should still continue, and thus
in all the Time the Gates of Heaven should not prevail against it.

It is almost unconceivable, how Princes can yet suffer a power so pernicious, and so destructive
to destructively to all Government. That so great a part of the Land should be alienated and
condemned too, as they call it, pious titles. That such millions of their people, as the
Clergy, should, by remaining unmarried, either frustrate Humane Nature, if they live chaste,
ly, or, if otherwise, adulterate it. That they should be privileged from all Labour, and
publick service; and exempt from the power of all Secular Jurisdiction. That they, *all bound* by strict Oaths and Yows, of Obedience to the Pope, should swear the Fealty due
to the Sovereign, that not only the Clergy, but the whole people, if of the Romish profes-
sion, should be obliged at any time upon the *Pope's* pleasure. And yet how many of the
neighbouring Princes are content, or do chuse to reign upon these Condition, which being
so dishonorable and dangerous, finely longitude and more weighty Reason does cause them
fear. Whether it be out of perfidious Past, having heard, perhaps of several Attempts
which the blind Obedience of *Papal Zelot* hath executed against their Princes. Or, whether
aiming at a more absolute and tyrannical Government, they think it will be the Case of
Brenus and *Vixas* (an usurping Empour, and an usurping Bishop) and that, as other
Causes, this also is best to be managed by Conference.

But, as far as I can apprehend, there is more of *Scorn* shewingly on the Priests side in these
confederates, and silent presence of following Men, by the assistance of *Roman* *metropolitans*,
is rather more the case, than within the Bramble, as having the best right of the Field, all the
shame of an Invasion for the future, and makes no more fit for the Hayward.

FINIS.

